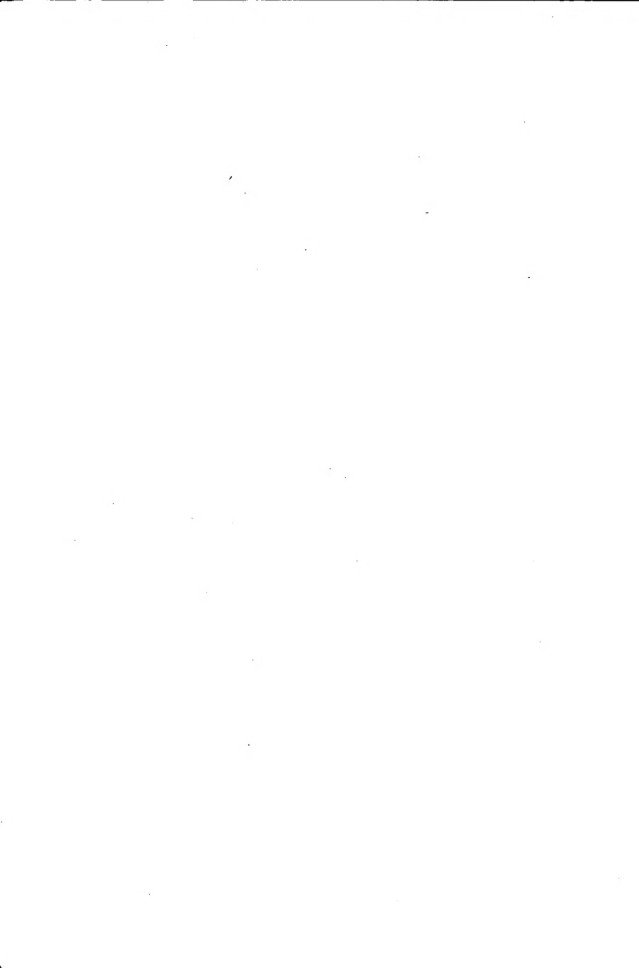




## CANADA'S YOUTH

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1986 Census of Canada

## CANADA'S YOUTH

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by Lia Ross

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## PREFACE

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**T**he 1986 Census of Canada provided, as did all the previous censuses, a rich source of information on individual, family and household characteristics of Canadians. The census data allow individual researchers as well as academic, business, cultural, social and governmental organizations to undertake in-depth enquiries and analyses on those social issues which interest and concern them.

This study is part of the 1986 Focus on Canada Series. The series is a modest effort by Statistics Canada to provide overviews of a wide variety of subjects on which the 1986 Census collected information. The studies have been written by experts, both inside and outside Statistics Canada, in non-technical language supported by simple tables and attractive charts. The topics include demographic characteristics (population, families, farmers, youth, seniors, the disabled), socio-cultural characteristics (ethnicity, language, education), and economic characteristics (women in the labour force, affordability of housing, occupational trends, employment income, family income).

The present study on "Canada's Youth" was authored by Lia Ross of Neighbours Consulting of Ottawa.

I would like to express my appreciation to the authors, to the reviewers and to the staff of the Bureau involved in managing and producing this series.

We hope that the studies in the Focus on Canada Series will not only provide Canadians with very useful information on various facets of Canadian society, but will also be an inducement for them to undertake further research on the topics.

Ivan P. Fellegi  
Chief Statistician of Canada



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## HIGHLIGHTS

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### Demographic Characteristics

- The youth population, aged 15 to 24, declined by half a million while the overall population increased by one million between 1981 and 1986.
- For young adults aged 20-24, 79% of the males and 60% of the females were single.
- The proportion of married youth declined by 3.7% between 1981 and 1986.

### Living Arrangements

- Over two-thirds (67.7%) of all youth lived with their parents, particularly the males.
- Youth left home primarily to marry or live in a common-law union (six times as many female teens, 15-19 years, than male teens and twice as many female young adults, 20-24 years, as male young adults were married, were living common-law or were lone parents).

### Education

- Full-time attendance at school was almost equal for both males and females.
- Over half of the young adults had received at least some postsecondary education.
- More youth attended non-university educational institutions (19.8%) than university (15%).
- Youth had the largest increase in the bilingualism rate since 1981 and, by 1986, one in five was bilingual.
- In the top 10 fields of study, female youth dominated the fields of commerce, management and business administration, arts, humanities, health and education and recreation and counselling fields while male youth were dominant in engineering, mathematics and applied sciences.

### Work Activity

- Full-time work decreased while part-time work increased for youth.
- Almost two-thirds (65.5%) of young working males were employed full time compared to 57.3% of young females.

- 
- Over half of all employed youth were in the trade and service industries.
  - The youth unemployment rate (17%) was twice the adult unemployment rate (8.5%).
  - Only 2.1% of youth were self-employed in both 1981 and 1986.

### **Income**

- The average income of male youth in 1985 was larger by 26% compared to that of female youth.
- Over two-thirds of youth (67.8%) lived with their parental families with an average family income of about \$47,000 in 1985.
- The average contribution to family income in 1985 for those living with parental families was \$1,523 for teens and \$7,617 for young adults.
- Sixteen point three per cent (16.3%) of youth were husbands, wives or common-law partners with an average family income of \$25,800.
- For the 14.6% of youth who lived as non-family persons and the 1.3% who were lone parents, the average family income was less than \$10,000 in 1985.

## INTRODUCTION

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**A**ccording to the 1986 Census, Canada's youth, defined as persons 15 to 24 years of age, accounted for about 17% of the total population. Both the quantity and quality of the youth population are valuable national resources since they will constitute an important element of the productive work force in the nineties.

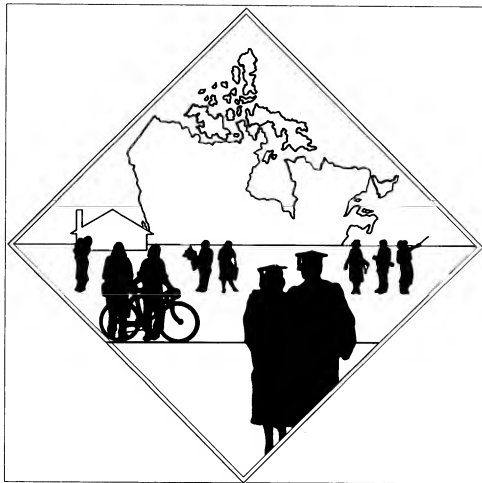
This study analyses the characteristics of Canada's youth in terms of demographic structure, living arrangements, educational attainment, work patterns and income. The youth have been divided in two broad age groups: those between the ages of 15 and 19 are referred to as "teens", while those between 20 and 24 are called "young adults".

Youth encompass a large age span in terms of development. Teens are often still in school, living with their parents and unmarried, while those between 20 and 24 have a greater likelihood of maintaining a household independent of their parents, being employed and perhaps even raising a family. For this reason, wherever possible, data on these two subgroups are given along with totals for the entire youth population. In most cases, trends are traced for five years from 1981 to 1986 but, in some cases, longer trends are included. Comparisons are occasionally made with adults aged 25 to 29.

This study is based primarily on the 1986 Census, with some comparisons to census data of other years. In some cases, data from other sources, such as the monthly Labour Force Survey, have been used.



## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS





## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

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Canada's total population increased from 24.3 to 25.3 million between 1981 and 1986. Over these five years, however, the youth population aged 15 to 24 decreased from 4.7 million to 4.2 million. As a proportion of the total population, youth declined from 19.1% in 1981 to 16.5% in 1986.

### Age and Sex

Table 1 shows the distribution of youth by age and sex in 1981 and 1986. In 1981, teens and young adults each represented approximately 10% of the Canadian population but, by 1986, teens decreased to 7.6% while the young adults dropped to 8.9% of the total population. Thus, not only was there a decline in the total youth population, but there was also a shift from the teens to the young adults.

The total youth population peaked in 1981. The teen population peaked in 1976, whereas young adults rose to their highest numbers in 1981. The teen population decreased between 1976 and 1986 because of lower fertility rates, but the young adults increased as more teens matured. In 1981, the proportion of teens and young adults was almost equal but, by 1986, the young adults represented about 54% of total youth population.

There was no change in the sex composition of youth. In both 1981 and 1986, the proportions of males and females were almost equal.

As Table 2 shows, the native population in Canada in 1986 was

significantly younger compared to the non-native population. Among persons with native origins, 21.8% were in the youth group compared to 16.5% among the total population. Also, contrary to the general population, the native teens outnumbered the native young adults.

### Marital Status and Fertility

A significant demographic change for young Canadians in the five years from 1981 to 1986 was delayed marriage. As Table 3 shows, this was particularly true for those aged 20-24. In 1981, 71.4% of young adult males and 50.7% of young adult females were single. These proportions increased to 78.9% and 60.0% respectively by 1986. This contrasts sharply with 25 years ago, in 1961, when only 40.0% of young adult females were single. The increase in the proportion of never-married/single youth coincided with changes in their living arrangements, educational pursuits and work patterns.

Since the population stayed single longer, regardless of age, the percentage of youth that are married or living common-law has dropped, particularly that of young females. The decrease in the proportion of male teens that were married or living common-law was minimal (1.5% in 1981 compared to 1.1% in 1986), whereas the female teens experienced a 2.1 percentage point drop (6.5% in 1981 to 4.4% by 1986). Over the same period, the proportions of young adult females married or living common-law dropped from 46.4% in 1981 to 37.8% in 1986 and that of young adult males from 27.6% to 20.3%.

**Table 1. Distribution of Youth (Number and Percentage) by Age and Sex, Canada, 1981 and 1986**

Year	Age	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
					%	%	%
1981	15	218,400	207,490	425,895	9.3	9.0	9.2
	16	236,870	225,320	462,185	10.0	9.8	9.9
	17	244,065	231,885	475,960	10.4	10.1	10.2
	18	244,325	235,475	479,800	10.4	10.2	10.3
	19	238,350	232,700	471,045	10.1	10.1	10.1
	<b>TEENS</b>	<b>1,182,015</b>	<b>1,132,875</b>	<b>2,314,890</b>	<b>50.2</b>	<b>49.2</b>	<b>49.7</b>
	20	241,515	237,900	479,415	10.2	10.3	10.3
	21	239,020	235,980	475,000	10.1	10.3	10.2
	22	232,295	232,585	464,880	9.9	10.1	10.0
	23	232,035	232,025	464,060	9.9	10.1	9.9
	24	229,425	231,020	460,445	9.7	10.0	9.9
	<b>YOUNG ADULTS</b>	<b>1,174,290</b>	<b>1,169,515</b>	<b>2,343,810</b>	<b>49.8</b>	<b>50.8</b>	<b>50.3</b>
	<b>TOTAL YOUTH</b>	<b>2,356,305</b>	<b>2,302,390</b>	<b>4,658,695</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
1986	15	200,450	190,610	391,060	9.5	9.2	9.4
	16	199,335	188,085	387,425	9.4	9.1	9.3
	17	194,885	184,300	379,185	9.2	8.9	9.1
	18	192,680	184,930	377,620	9.1	9.0	9.0
	19	197,895	191,670	389,565	9.3	9.3	9.3
	<b>TEENS</b>	<b>985,255</b>	<b>939,605</b>	<b>1,924,855</b>	<b>46.5</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>46.1</b>
	20	208,440	203,680	412,120	9.9	9.9	9.9
	21	225,005	221,665	446,665	10.6	10.8	10.7
	22	231,345	228,925	460,275	10.9	11.1	11.0
	23	234,525	234,275	468,805	11.1	11.4	11.2
	24	232,140	233,340	465,480	11.0	11.3	11.1
	<b>YOUNG ADULTS</b>	<b>1,131,450</b>	<b>1,121,890</b>	<b>2,253,345</b>	<b>53.5</b>	<b>54.5</b>	<b>53.9</b>
	<b>TOTAL YOUTH</b>	<b>2,116,705</b>	<b>2,061,495</b>	<b>4,178,200</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding.

Source:

1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada.



**Table 2. Percentage Distribution of Total Population and Native Population by Age, Canada, 1986**

	Total	0 - 14 years	15 - 19 years	20 - 24 years	15 - 24 years	25 years and over
<b>Total population</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>61.8</b>
<b>Native population<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>35.3</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>42.9</b>
Inuit	100.0	39.5	12.4	11.1	23.5	37.0
North American						
Indian	100.0	35.4	11.3	10.2	21.5	43.1
Métis	100.0	33.1	12.0	10.4	22.4	44.5

<sup>1</sup> Refers to persons who reported being of single Inuit, North American Indian or Métis origin only

Source:

1986 Census of Canada.

**Table 3. Percentage Distribution of Youth by Age, Sex and Marital Status, Canada, 1981 and 1986**

Age groups and sex	1981				1986			
	Total	Single	Married	Other	Total	Single	Married	Other
<b>15 - 19 Years</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>95.9</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>97.1</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>0.1</b>
Male	100.0	98.4	1.5	0.1	100.0	98.7	1.1	0.2
Female	100.0	93.3	6.5	0.2	100.0	95.3	4.4	0.3
<b>20 - 24 Years</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>61.0</b>	<b>37.1</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>69.4</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>1.5</b>
Male	100.0	71.4	27.6	1.0	100.0	78.9	20.3	0.8
Female	100.0	50.7	46.4	2.9	100.0	60.0	37.8	2.2
<b>15 - 24 Years</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>78.3</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>82.2</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>0.9</b>
Male	100.0	85.0	14.5	0.5	100.0	88.2	11.3	0.5
Female	100.0	71.6	26.8	1.6	100.0	76.1	22.6	1.3

**Note:** The category single refers to those who have never been married. The category married includes common-law relationships. The category other includes those who are separated, divorced or widowed.

Source:

1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada.

If youth were not leaving home to get married, were they leaving home to live in common-law unions? When those youth who were legally married were examined separately from those who were living common-law, there was an increase in such arrangements for both young males (from 4.0% to 4.2%) and females (from 6.3% to 7.1%).

Fewer young people staying single longer has resulted in a lower percentage of them giving birth. Data from sources other than the 1986 Census indicate that the percentage of teens giving birth decreased slightly from 2.6% in 1981 to 2.3% in 1986. For young adult mothers, the percentage declined from 9.5% to 8.3% over the period.



## LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

### Youth Living in Parental Home

Not only did young people postpone marriage, but they also lived with their parents longer. In 1981, 64.2% lived with their parents but, by 1986, this proportion increased to 67.7%.

By comparing the proportion of youth who lived with their parents by age and sex, between 1981 and 1986, it was clear that all categories of youth were staying home longer, particularly the young adults (Chart 1).

Male youth living at home continued to outnumber female youth living at home. In the teen-age years, 52.3% of youth living with parents were males and, in the young adult group, 59.0% were males. Even in the adult age group, 25-29 years, there were twice as many males (18.4%) as females (9.4%) staying in their parental home. More young women than men left their parental home to marry or to form common-law unions.

Although the actual numbers of youth decreased, the percentage of youth living with their parents increased. In 1981, 1.6 million young men lived with their parents compared to 1.5 million in 1986, but the percentage living at home increased from 70.5% in 1981 to 73.7% in 1986. Similar changes took place in the case of female youth. Compared to 1.3 million young women (57.9%) in 1981, 1.25 million young women (61.6%) lived at home in 1986.

Given the change in the age composition of youth, the number of teens living at home decreased while that of young adults living at home increased. However, the proportions of

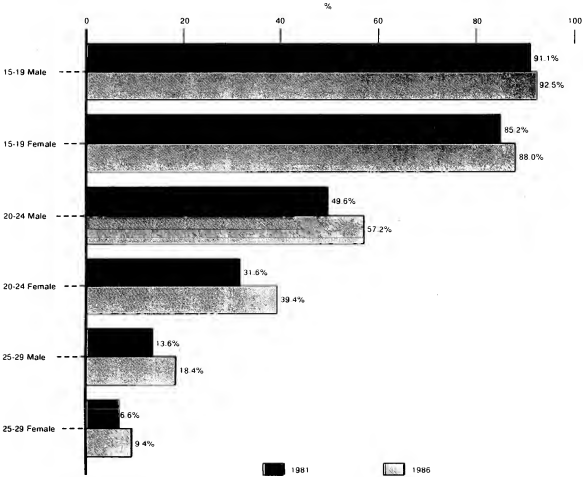
teens living with parents increased from 91.1% in 1981 to 92.5% in 1986 for males and from 85.2% to 88.0% for females. This was also true for young adults for whom the proportions living at home increased from 49.6% in 1981 to 57.2% in 1986 for males and from 31.6% to 39.4% for females.

As Chart 2 indicates, all the provinces and territories experienced this increase of youth living with their parents, with the Yukon and Alberta showing the largest increases of nine percentage points, and Prince Edward Island showing the smallest increase of one percentage point. The Atlantic provinces, with the highest level of unemployment, also had the highest number of youth still living in the parental home. For Canada as a whole, the proportion of young people still in their parental home increased by 3.5 percentage points between 1981 and 1986.

For all youth, the impetus was to live in family settings, either in their parental home or in one of their own making. For the fewer than 10% of teens who left their parental home, over half were still in family households, either living with relatives or non-relatives, or as husbands, wives, common-law partners or lone parents. Only 3.3% of teens lived in non-family households. For the 51.7% of young adults who left home, the majority (35%) were still in family households, while 16.7% were in non-family settings.

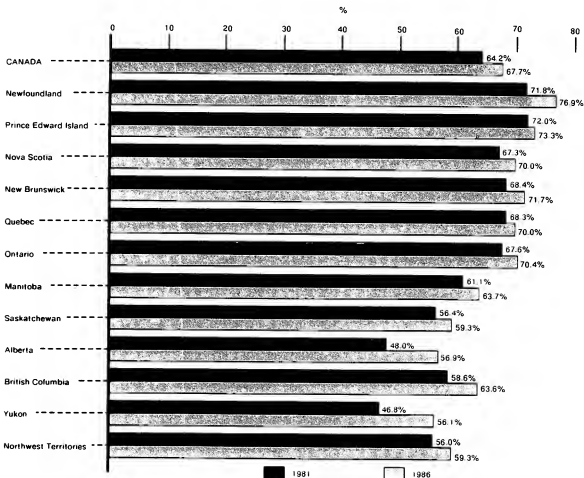
As Table 4 indicates, more young females than young males were either married or living with a common-law spouse. Six times more female teens

**Chart 1. Percentage of Youth Living in Parental Home by Age and Sex, Canada, 1981 and 1986**



**Source:**  
1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada.

**Chart 2. Percentage of Youth Living in Parental Home, Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1981 and 1986**



Source:  
1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada.

were either married, living with a common-law partner or were lone parents than male teens. This compared to twice as many females as males in the young adult group. For both age groups, a higher percentage of males lived with their parents, but almost the same percentage of males and females lived alone.

#### Youth Living Alone

In 1986, 3.8% of all young women and 3.7% of all young men lived alone. This was a marginal decline from 1981,

when 4.4% of young women and 4.4% of young men lived alone. Thus, the proportion of youth living on their own has remained fairly static since 1981, showing again that the majority of youth stay at home until they marry or enter a common-law relationship.

#### Households Maintained by Youth

In 1981, among the total of 8.3 million private households in Canada, 8% were maintained by youth. By 1986, this had decreased to 6% of the 9.0 million private households.

**Table 4. Percentage Distribution of Youth by Age Groups, Sex and Living Arrangements, Canada, 1986**

Age groups and sex	Total in private households	Living arrangements				
		In family households			In non-family households	
		Living in parental home	Husband, wife, lone parent	Living with relatives or non-relatives	Living with relatives or non-relatives	Living alone
		%				
15 - 19	100.0	90.3	2.7	3.7	2.6	0.7
Male	100.0	92.5	0.8	3.6	2.4	0.6
Female	100.0	88.0	4.6	3.8	2.8	0.9
20 - 24	100.0	48.3	30.4	4.6	10.4	6.3
Male	100.0	57.2	19.9	5.2	11.3	6.5
Female	100.0	39.4	40.9	4.0	9.4	6.2
15 - 24	100.0	67.7	17.6	4.2	6.8	3.7
Male	100.0	73.7	10.9	4.5	7.2	3.7
Female	100.0	61.6	24.3	3.9	6.4	3.8

**Note:** A family household is defined as persons living in the same dwelling who have a husband-wife or parent and never-married child relationship. A non-family household refers to a group of persons who occupy a private dwelling and do not constitute a census family.

**Source:**

1986 Census of Canada.

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In 1986, young female household maintainers lived alone (33.7%) much more often than young males (25.0%). This was similar to 1981 when 41% of young women lived alone compared with close to 24.0% of young men. Thus, even though the number of women living alone decreased and the number of men living alone increased, there were still more young women maintaining their household alone in 1986.

Again, in 1986, proportionately more 15-19-year old males who maintained households (34.6%) lived alone than those aged 20-24 (24.4%). Male teens were more likely to live alone prior to marriage, while young male adults either married, lived common-law or lived with their parents. For both the teen and young adult females, however, the percentages living by themselves were similar, showing that more young females were willing to live alone.





## EDUCATION

**B**oth the quality and the quantity of education in Canada have been increasing over the years. There are more Canadians with a university degree today than a decade or two ago. Full-time pursuit of education is much more prevalent now than ever before. For example, fewer than one in two teens were attending school full time in 1951 compared to three in four in 1986. Among young adults, one in five attended school full time in 1986, whereas only one in twenty young adults did so in 1951.

### School Attendance

Between 1981 and 1986, full-time school attendance for teens increased substantially for both males and females. The trend begun by these teens will increase the proportion of young adults in school in the next five years, as some

complete postsecondary education. As Table 5 indicates, from 1981 to 1986, 20-24-year old women increased their full-time attendance to almost equal that of the males. This factor has undoubtedly influenced the postponement of marriage for both sexes and will similarly affect the labour force participation rates of youth in the future.

### Highest Level of Schooling

As can be seen in Chart 3, more than half of the graduation age cohort had received secondary school graduation certificates. Over 5% of those aged 17 had received at least some additional training at college, in trade schools, CEGEPs, community colleges, institutes of technology and similar institutions and 6% of those aged 18 had attended at least some university courses.

**Table 5. Percentage of Youth Attending School Full Time by Age Groups and Sex, Canada, 1981 and 1986<sup>1</sup>**

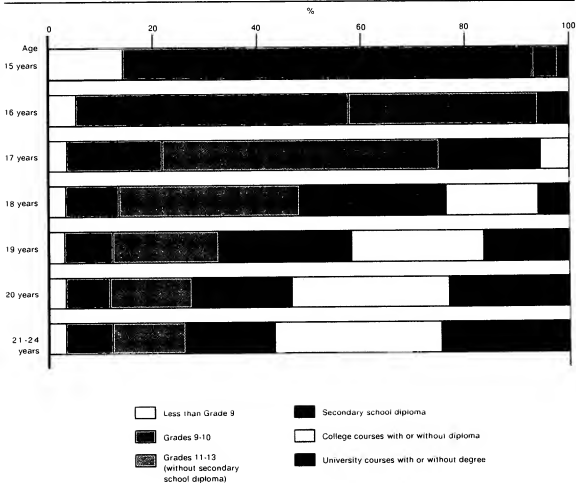
Age groups and sex	1981	1986
	%	
<b>15 - 19</b>	<b>64.3</b>	<b>72.9</b>
Male	64.5	72.9
Female	64.0	72.9
<b>20 - 24</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>18.6</b>
Male	14.9	19.1
Female	12.4	18.1
<b>15 - 24</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>45.8</b>
Male	39.7	46.0
Female	38.2	45.5

<sup>1</sup> Excludes those who attended trade schools.

Source:

Unpublished data, Education Sub-Division, Statistics Canada

**Chart 3. Percentage Distribution of Youth by Highest Level of Schooling and Age, Canada, 1986**



**Note:** Those areas which account for less than 1% are not shown.

**Source:**

1986 Census of Canada.

About 5% of the young people had either no education or had reached Grade 8 or less, 9% to 10% reached Grades 9 and 10 only, and 14% to 15% reached Grades 11 to 13 only. The levels of education were fairly stable between the ages of 21 and 24, but it should be noted that over half of the young adults had received at least some postsecondary education.

As shown in Table 6, in 1986, a smaller percentage of young people reported either the elementary or secondary levels as their highest educational achievement compared to 1981. Thus, more young people had a level of schooling above elementary or secondary level in 1986.

Compared with 30.3% in 1981, 34.8% of youth had received postsecondary education in 1986. About one-third went into trades schools or colleges while two-thirds chose to enter a university. The proportion of those with university education increased from 12.1% in 1981 to 15.0% in 1986.

### Bilingualism

Since Canada has two official languages, English and French, the trends in bilingualism represent an important dimension of the Canadian profile. To put the youth bilingualism rate into perspective, one should note that in Canada, by 1986, two-thirds of Canada's population (66.3%) over 15 years of age spoke English only, while

**Table 6. Percentage Distribution of Youth by Highest Level of Schooling, Canada, 1981 and 1986**

Highest level of schooling	1981	1986
	%	
<b><u>Elementary and secondary:</u></b>	<b>69.7</b>	<b>65.2</b>
Less than Grade 9	5.4	4.8
Grades 9 and 10	22.4	20.7
Grades 11 - 13 (without secondary school diploma)	21.6	21.1
Secondary school diploma	17.9	16.5
Trades certificate or diploma	2.4	2.1
<b><u>Postsecondary education:</u></b>	<b>30.3</b>	<b>34.8</b>
Other non-university education only	18.2	19.8
University without degree, without other non-university education	5.3	7.0
University without degree, with other non-university education	3.5	4.0
University, with university degree	3.3	4.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source:  
1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada.

**Table 7. Percentage of Youth Who Are Bilingual by Age Groups, Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1981 and 1986**

Province/Territory	15 - 19 years		20 - 24 years	
	1981	1986	1981	1986
<b>CANADA</b>	<b>17.7</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>20.5</b>
Newfoundland	4.2	6.1	3.0	3.3
Prince Edward Island	8.7	13.0	9.2	9.7
Nova Scotia	9.4	12.9	8.8	10.2
New Brunswick	29.2	36.8	32.1	33.3
Quebec	32.4	38.0	38.9	45.2
Ontario	15.2	18.0	13.5	14.5
Manitoba	9.9	11.3	9.1	9.4
Saskatchewan	5.7	5.6	5.4	5.4
Alberta	8.0	9.2	8.7	7.2
British Columbia	8.3	11.1	6.9	7.5
Yukon	10.3	7.3	11.4	7.7
Northwest Territories	3.8	4.5	6.7	6.3

Source:  
1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada.

14.3% spoke only French. Only 18.3% of Canadians over the age of 15 were bilingual.

Throughout Canada, the overall bilingualism rate increased for all youth, from 18.3% in 1981 to 20.5% in 1986. Teens showed an even greater increase than young adults and will continue to push the rate upwards as they mature.

As Table 7 indicates, the rate of bilingualism for teens remained stable or

rose in all provinces except in the Yukon. An increase of almost eight percentage points occurred in New Brunswick.

For young adults, the bilingualism rate remained stable or increased for all provinces over the five-year period except for Alberta and the Yukon where it declined. In Quebec, there was an increase of over six percentage points in the proportion of bilingual young adults.

**Table 8. Distribution of Youth (Number and Percentage) by Sex and Top Ten Fields of Study, Canada, 1986**

Fields of study	Total		Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Commerce, management and business administration	215,925	25.7	55,300	14.7	160,625	34.5
2. Engineering and applied science technologies and trades	198,570	23.6	173,110	46.0	25,460	5.5
3. Social sciences and related fields	74,750	8.9	30,530	8.1	44,220	9.5
4. Fine and applied arts	73,215	8.7	13,425	3.6	59,790	12.9
5. Health professions, sciences and technologies	69,730	8.3	10,185	2.7	59,545	12.8
6. Agricultural and biological sciences/technologies	52,860	6.3	25,485	6.8	27,375	5.9
7. Humanities and related fields	51,920	6.2	19,120	5.1	32,800	7.1
8. Educational, recreational and counselling services	48,065	5.7	9,340	2.5	38,725	8.3
9. Mathematics and physical sciences	36,005	4.3	22,740	6.1	13,265	2.8
10. Engineering and applied sciences	19,855	2.3	16,715	4.4	3,140	0.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>840,895</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>375,950</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>464,945</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source:  
1986 Census of Canada.

Obviously, the emphasis on bilingualism throughout the school system has had an impressive impact on the youth population. Bilingualism for adults aged 25 and over only increased marginally from 17.5% to 17.7% between 1981 and 1986.

### Fields of Study

What fields of full-time postsecondary study did youth follow, and did men and women select different subjects?

Table 8 shows the distribution of youth in the top 10 fields of study. Almost one-half of them were in either commerce, management and business administration or engineering and applied science technologies and trades. These two fields accounted for 60.7% of the males and 40.0% of the females.

At the postsecondary level, young women and men chose different courses. As indicated in Table 9, women were dominant in commerce, the health professions, fine and applied arts, and educational, recreational and counselling services and the humanities, while males dominated the engineering and applied sciences, and mathematics and physical sciences. However, social sciences and agricultural and biological sciences also included more young women than young men.

Over a third of young women were in commerce, management and business administration while another quarter studied fine arts and the health professions. Almost half of young men were in engineering and applied science technologies and trades while an additional 14.7% studied commerce.

**Table 9. Percentage Distribution of Youth in Top Ten Fields of Study by Sex, Canada, 1986**

Fields of study	Total	Male	Female
	%	%	%
1. Commerce, management and business administration	100.0	25.6	74.4
2. Engineering and applied science technologies and trades	100.0	87.2	12.8
3. Social sciences and related fields	100.0	40.8	59.2
4. Fine and applied arts	100.0	18.3	81.7
5. Health professions, sciences and technologies	100.0	14.6	85.4
6. Agricultural and biological sciences/technologies	100.0	48.2	51.8
7. Humanities and related fields	100.0	36.8	63.2
8. Educational, recreational and counselling services	100.0	19.4	80.6
9. Mathematics and physical sciences	100.0	63.2	36.8
10. Engineering and applied sciences	100.0	84.2	15.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>44.7</b>	<b>55.3</b>

Source:  
1986 Census of Canada.

## WORK ACTIVITY

The census collects information from all persons 15 years and over on the number of weeks worked between January 1 and December 31 in the year prior to the census, whether most of the weeks worked were worked full time or part time. This information on youth allows for coverage of work activity during school vacation periods, between semesters, as well as after school hours. The data in the first section of this chapter refer to work activity from January to December. The subsequent data on industry, unemployment and self-employment refer to the labour market activity of the respondent in the week prior to the census.

### Youth Work Patterns

Table 10 presents data on the work patterns of youth in 1980 and 1985. The percentage of young people who worked

either full time or part time decreased marginally for all youth, from 69.7% in 1980 to 68.4% in 1985. For teens, the percentage working both full time and part time decreased from 51.8% in 1980 to 47.9% in 1985. For young adults, the percentage also decreased from 87.3% in 1980 to 85.8% in 1985. But, the changes with respect to full- and part-time work were not uniform.

As the data show, the incidence of full-time work among both teens and young adults within each sex decreased, while the rate of part-time work increased.

In 1980, 54.1% of young people who worked did so mostly part time. This proportion increased to 65.3% in 1985. Since the proportion of youth who stayed in their parental home longer and went to school longer rose during this period, the increase in part-time work

**Table 10. Percentage Distribution of Youth by Age Groups, Sex and Work Activity, Canada, 1980 and 1985**

Age groups and sex	Work activity					
	1980			1985		
	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time
	%					
<b>15 - 19</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>45.9</b>	<b>54.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34.7</b>	<b>65.3</b>
Male	100.0	49.1	50.9	100.0	38.1	61.9
Female	100.0	42.2	57.8	100.0	30.9	69.1
<b>20 - 24</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>83.2</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>74.4</b>	<b>25.6</b>
Male	100.0	87.1	12.9	100.0	78.9	21.1
Female	100.0	78.8	21.2	100.0	69.5	30.5
<b>15 - 24</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>69.4</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>61.6</b>	<b>38.4</b>
Male	100.0	72.9	27.1	100.0	65.5	34.5
Female	100.0	65.4	34.6	100.0	57.3	42.7

Source:  
1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada.

was understandable. Moreover, the increase in part-time work for youth was consistent with a larger trend since the percentage of part-time workers increased at all age levels.

In 1980 and 1985, a greater percentage of young male workers worked full time than did young female workers (72.9% compared to 65.4% in 1980 and 65.5% compared to 57.3% in 1985). Again, this finding is not restricted to the youth population.

#### Youth Distribution by Major Industry

Youth represented a smaller proportion of the work force, aged 15 and over, in 1986 than in 1981.

In all industries in 1981, 4.5 million women, aged 15 and over, were employed. Of these, over a quarter (27.3%) were female youth. By 1986, 5.0 million females aged 15 and over worked but young women represented only 22.3% of employed women. This five percentage point decrease occurred not only because of the smaller numbers of female youth, but also because more female adults had become employed.

In 1981, for the 6.7 million men over the age of 15 who were employed, 21.3% were male youth. By 1986, there were still 6.7 million males aged 15 and over employed but young men represented only 18.3%. Since approximately the same number of men were working in both years, the three

**Table 11. Percentage Distribution of Employed Persons by Industry Divisions and Age Groups, Canada, 1981 and 1986**

Industry divisions	Age groups							
	1981				1986			
	Total	15-19	20-24	25 +	Total	15-19	20-24	25 +
	%				%			
<b>All industries</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>76.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>80.0</b>
Agriculture	100.0	10.2	10.4	79.3	100.0	8.5	9.9	81.7
Forestry	100.0	6.4	17.5	76.0	100.0	4.5	14.8	80.8
Fishing and trapping	100.0	7.6	13.5	78.9	100.0	4.9	13.7	81.4
Mines, quarries and oil wells	100.0	4.6	19.2	76.2	100.0	1.5	10.9	87.5
Manufacturing	100.0	5.8	16.4	77.7	100.0	3.2	13.2	83.6
Construction	100.0	6.0	15.9	78.1	100.0	4.5	14.5	81.0
Transportation, communication and other utilities	100.0	3.7	14.6	81.7	100.0	1.7	9.8	88.5
Trade	100.0	13.8	17.4	68.8	100.0	11.0	17.9	71.2
Finance, insurance and real estate	100.0	4.9	19.4	75.7	100.0	2.2	13.0	84.8
Community, business and personal services	100.0	9.1	14.4	76.5	100.0	7.4	14.1	78.5
Public administration and defence	100.0	4.4	14.2	81.4	100.0	3.0	12.0	85.0
Industry unspecified and undefined	100.0	13.0	13.4	73.7	100.0	10.7	16.7	72.6

Source  
1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada.



percentage point decrease for young males was due to their smaller population count.

Table 11 shows the proportions of youth in each of the industry divisions in 1981 and 1986. In both years, the highest proportion of youth worked in the trade industry. By 1986, the teens alone represented 11.0% of those working in trade, while the young adults represented another 17.9%.

In 1986, youth represented a smaller proportion of workers in all industries, but especially in mines, quarries and oil wells, and in finance, insurance and real estate. In 1981, youth were most represented in trade and finance, insurance and real estate but, by 1986, that had changed to trade

and community, business and personal services.

Table 12 shows the industry distribution by age group. Although, in both 1981 and 1986, the trade industry had the highest proportion of young people (Table 11), most youth were employed in community, business and personal services. As of 1986, over half of all employed youth (57.2%) were either in community, business and personal services or trade.

Both in 1981 and 1986, 9 out of 10 youth in construction were men; women represented the largest proportion in only finance, insurance and real estate and community, business and personal services. Only in public administration and defence were the proportions fairly equal between men and women (Table 13).

**Table 12. Percentage Distribution of Employed Persons by Age Groups and Industry Divisions, Canada, 1981 and 1986**

Industry divisions	Age groups					
	1981			1986		
	15-19	20-24	25 +	15-19	20-24	25 +
	%			%		
<b>All industries</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Agriculture	5.2	2.8	4.3	5.6	2.9	4.2
Forestry	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7
Fishing and trapping	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3
Mines, quarries and oil wells	1.0	2.2	1.8	0.4	1.1	1.5
Manufacturing	13.3	19.6	18.8	8.9	16.0	17.7
Construction	4.5	6.2	6.2	3.9	5.6	5.4
Transportation, communication and other utilities	3.6	7.5	8.5	2.2	5.4	8.5
Trade	27.8	18.3	14.8	29.6	21.2	14.7
Finance, insurance and real estate	3.2	6.7	5.3	2.0	5.1	5.8
Community, business and personal services	31.5	26.2	28.3	37.8	31.5	30.5
Public administration and defence	4.0	6.9	8.0	3.7	6.5	8.0
Industry unspecified and undefined	5.1	2.7	3.1	5.2	3.6	2.7

Source:  
1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada.

**Table 13. Percentage of Employed Persons by Industry Divisions, Age Groups and Sex, Canada, 1981 and 1986**

Industry divisions	Age groups and sex							
	1981				1986			
	15-19		20-24		15-19		20-24	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	%							
<b>All industries</b>	<b>53.5</b>	<b>46.5</b>	<b>54.1</b>	<b>45.9</b>	<b>52.7</b>	<b>47.3</b>	<b>52.5</b>	<b>47.5</b>
Agriculture	76.2	23.8	75.8	24.3	75.6	24.4	74.2	25.9
Forestry	81.9	18.2	84.6	15.4	86.0	13.9	82.3	17.7
Fishing and trapping	88.9	11.1	88.6	11.4	86.3	13.5	87.4	12.6
Mines, quarries and oil wells	76.6	23.5	79.1	21.0	77.4	22.8	75.7	24.3
Manufacturing	67.5	32.5	69.7	30.3	67.0	33.0	67.5	32.5
Construction	90.4	9.6	90.0	10.0	89.5	10.6	90.1	9.9
Transportation, communication and other utilities	65.3	34.7	65.7	34.3	68.9	31.1	65.2	34.8
Trade	53.7	46.3	56.1	43.9	52.3	47.8	54.0	46.0
Finance, insurance and real estate	18.0	82.0	19.8	80.2	30.2	69.8	24.4	75.6
Community, business and personal services	39.2	60.8	33.2	66.8	41.4	58.6	35.4	64.6
Public administration and defence	52.3	47.8	48.9	51.1	52.6	47.4	51.9	48.1
Industry unspecified and undefined	54.8	45.2	57.8	42.2	55.3	44.7	55.8	44.2

Source:  
1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada.

### Youth Unemployment

According to the census data, the labour force participation rate<sup>1</sup> for youth increased slightly from 66.0% in 1981 to 67.8% in 1986. In 1986, fewer young people were in the labour force, a decrease from 3.1 million in 1981 to 2.8 million in 1986. However, a higher percentage were unemployed. The unemployment rate among the youth increased from 13.7% in 1981 to 17.0% in 1986.

In comparison, the labour force participation rate for the adult population

25 years and over increased between 1981 and 1986 from 64.6% to 66.1%, and the unemployment rate increased from 5.5% to 8.5%.

The youth unemployment rate increased in every province in 1986 compared to 1981, as indicated in Table 14. Newfoundland and the Northwest Territories registered at least a 10 percentage point increase, and Alberta, British Columbia and the Yukon showed an increase of over 8 percentage points.

Using Labour Force Survey statistics, which monitor labour activity

<sup>1</sup> At any given time, the labour force equals the total number of employed and unemployed persons, the labour force participation rate equals the labour force divided by the total population, and the unemployment rate equals the number of unemployed divided by the number in the labour force.

**Table 14. Percentage of Youth Unemployed, Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1981 and 1986**

Province/Territory	Unemployment	
	1981	1986
	%	
<b>CANADA</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>17.0</b>
Newfoundland	28.1	38.9
Prince Edward Island	19.0	22.6
Nova Scotia	17.5	22.2
New Brunswick	21.2	25.8
Quebec	20.1	21.6
Ontario	11.4	12.2
Manitoba	9.5	13.3
Saskatchewan	9.0	14.8
Alberta	6.5	14.6
British Columbia	11.1	20.0
Yukon	12.8	21.3
Northwest Territories	14.8	24.8

Source:  
1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada.

on a monthly basis, the trends of unemployment are shown in Chart 4. Based on annual averages, the unemployment rate for all youth rose from a low in 1981 to a high in 1983 then returned to a mid-position by 1986. Both teens and young adults followed this trend, with the teens showing the largest amount of unemployment, with a high of 22.2% in 1983. The unemployment of the 25 and over age group showed a much smaller increase from 1981 to 1983 and yet, for both adults and youth, the 1986 unemployment level was still higher than in 1981. As well, the 1986 youth rate of unemployment was almost twice that of the adult population.

### Youth Self-employment

If youth were finding it difficult to obtain work, was there any change in the relative proportions that were classified as self-employed?

As a percentage of those employed, only 1% of teens were self-employed in either 1981 or 1986. The percentage of self-employed young adults decreased marginally from 1981 (2.8%) to 1986 (2.5%). For all employed youth, 2.1% were self-employed in each year. For the 25 and over age group, the percentage of self-employed also remained stable at 12.0% in 1981 and 12.1% in 1986.

**Table 15. Distribution of Self-employed Persons (Number and Percentage) by Age Groups and Sex, Canada, 1981 and 1986**

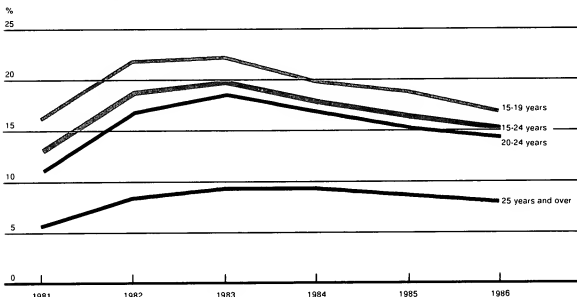
Age groups		1981			1986		
		Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
15 - 19	No.	8,725	6,575	2,150	7,835	5,830	2,010
	%	100.0	75.4	24.6	100.0	74.4	25.6
20 - 24	No.	47,855	37,920	9,935	41,335	30,545	10,790
	%	100.0	79.2	20.8	100.0	73.9	26.1
15 - 24	No.	56,580	44,495	12,085	49,170	36,375	12,800
	%	100.0	78.6	21.4	100.0	74.0	26.0
25 and over	No.	1,020,145	831,310	188,835	1,132,660	891,300	241,360
	%	100.0	81.5	18.5	100.0	78.7	21.3

**Note.** The numbers of self-employed include those in both incorporated and unincorporated businesses.

**Source.**

1981 and 1986 Censuses of Canada.

**Chart 4. Unemployment Rate (Annual Averages) by Age Groups, Canada, 1981 to 1986**



**Source:**

Labour Force Survey statistics

## INCOME

The 1986 Census of Canada collected information from all persons 15 years and over on their income during the calendar year 1985. On the whole, 74% of all youth reported having received income in 1985. As Table 16 shows, most of the young adults (92.0%) received some income in 1985 but nearly one-half (47.1%) of teens did not have any income of their own in 1985.

The income of youth, averaged over all income recipients, amounted to \$7,843 in 1985. The average income of teens (\$3,337) was only one-third that of young adults (\$10,057). Although the proportion of male youth with income (75.8%) was only slightly higher than that of female youth (72.2%), the average income of males (\$8,719) was larger by 26.3% compared with that of females (\$6,901).

The average income of youth, when considered in isolation from their living arrangements, is unlikely to provide a

very useful indication of their economic well-being. Two young persons, each 20 years of age and with an income of \$10,000 in 1985, but one living with financially well-off parents and the other living on his or her own, will not experience similar economic circumstances.

To analyse their income position, the youth were, therefore, divided into the following four groups:

- youth living with parents as children;
- youth living as husbands or wives;
- youth living as lone parents;
- youth living as non-family persons.

Table 17 shows the distribution of youth classified by these four groups and by income size. For the first three groups (Columns 1-4), the income size indicates the total family income, while for non-family persons (Column 5), income size conforms to the actual income of the young non-family person.

**Table 16. Percentage of Youth With Income and Their Average Income by Age Groups and Sex, Canada, 1985**

Age groups	With income			Average income		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
	%			\$		
15 - 19	54.5	51.3	52.9	3,595	3,050	3,337
20 - 24	94.4	89.6	92.0	11,299	8,744	10,057
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75.8</b>	<b>72.2</b>	<b>74.0</b>	<b>8,719</b>	<b>6,901</b>	<b>7,843</b>

Source:  
1986 Census of Canada.

**Table 17. Percentage Distribution of Youth by Family Status and Family Income Size Groups, Canada, 1985**

Family income	Family status				
	Children 15 - 19	Children 20 - 24	Husband/ wife	Lone parent	Non-family person
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Distribution by family income</b>	%				
Under \$5,000	3.1	1.9	5.0	37.6	37.9
\$ 5,000 - \$ 9,999	4.0	2.5	7.4	40.8	23.1
10,000 - 14,999	5.6	4.0	11.0	13.3	16.5
15,000 - 19,999	6.1	4.9	13.4	4.9	11.1
20,000 - 24,999	7.1	5.9	14.2	1.7	5.9
25,000 - 29,999	7.9	6.7	13.5	0.9	3.1
30,000 - 34,999	8.7	7.4	11.6	0.8	2.4
35,000 - 39,999	8.9	7.7	8.8		
40,000 - 44,999	8.6	7.8	6.2		
45,000 - 49,999	7.6	7.6	3.7		
50,000 - 59,999	12.0	13.3	3.3		
60,000 and over	20.4	30.3	1.8		
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Average family income	\$ 43,711	51,076	25,807	7,229	9,207
Average contribution of youth	\$ 1,523	7,617	10,585	7,075	9,207
Percentage of family income contributed by youth %	3.5	14.9	41.0	97.9	100.0
<b>Distribution by family status</b>	<b>41.8</b>	<b>26.0</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>14.6</b>

Source:  
1986 Census of Canada.

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### **Youth Living as Children**

Of all youth, 41.8% were teenage children living with their parental families. About one quarter (25.9%) of them belonged to families with an income of less than \$25,000 and about one-third (32.4%) belonged to families with an income of \$50,000 and over in 1985. Family income of the remaining 41.7% of teens ranged between \$25,000 and \$49,999.

Another 26.0% of all youth were children aged 20-24 years, living with their parents. Over one-half (51.2%) of these young adults were in families with an income of at least \$45,000 and over, while 30.3% were in families with an income of \$60,000 and over. Family income for 19.2% of young adults was under \$25,000 in 1985.

The average income of the husband-wife families with teens was \$43,711 and that of families with young adults was \$51,076. As may be expected, a major part of the difference in the family incomes of these two groups came from the contribution of youth towards family income.

### **Youth Living as Husbands or Wives**

Of all youth, 16.3% were part of husband-wife families in which either the husband or the wife was 15 to 24 years old. These were relatively young families in the early stages of the family life cycle.

The average family income of this group was \$25,807 in 1985. The contribution of youth amounted to 41% of the family income (\$10,585). This contribution may appear low but it should be noted that two-thirds of the youth in this group were young wives. Since, on average, husbands are older than wives, the families formed by young wives are likely to have husbands aged 25 and over. The incomes of these husbands form part of family income reducing the relative proportion contributed by young wives.

### **Youth Living as Lone Parents**

A very small proportion (1.3%) of youth were lone parents, most of whom were females. Young lone parents were highly concentrated in the lower income groups. Their average income was only \$7,229 and nearly four out of five had a family income of less than \$10,000 in 1985.

### **Youth Living as Non-family Persons**

Finally, 14.6% of all youth were living as non-family persons. They were living either on their own or in households where they were not part of a parent-never-married child relationship. This group also had low incomes. Three out of five non-family persons had an income of less than \$10,000 in 1985. Their average income was \$9,207 in 1985.





## CONCLUSION

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One in six Canadians in 1986 was a young person 15 to 24 years of age. This report has presented a profile of those young Canadians.

Over two-thirds of the youth were living as children with their parents while one-sixth were living with their own families as husbands or wives. Not only were a larger proportion of youth attending school in 1986 than before, but a larger proportion also reached postsecondary levels of education.

Youth represented about one-fifth of all workers in Canada. They were concentrated in trade and service industries, with substantial numbers working part time. The unemployment rate among youth was almost twice that of the adult population. Although the average income of the families in which two-thirds of the youth lived was about \$47,000 in 1985, about a quarter of the youth living with their parents had a family income of less than \$25,000 in 1985. The income of most of the youth living on their own or as lone parents was less than \$10,000 in 1985.

Like other population groups, youth were also subject to the impact of the recession of the early eighties. However, a positive factor favouring their future is the increasingly higher levels of education being attained by youth.



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